

- citric acid and sodium citrate, wherein the partially chelated mixture has a moisture content of at most 1.25% by weight of the mixture.

(Amended) The composition according to claim 17, wherein the [divalent] metal of the [divalent] metal salt is selected from the group consisting of iron, copper, zinc and manganese.

Please add the following newly-presented claims 23-34

23. A method of manufacturing a water soluble composition adapted for subsequent solubilizing and application to agricultural crops, consisting essentially of comprising the steps of:

- mixing a divalent metal salt, citric acid and sodium citrate to obtain a nitrate-free mixture having a moisture content of from approximately 10% to 1.25% by weight; and

processing the nitrate-free mixture in a drying environment to obtain a nitrate-free product which is partially chelated and has a moisture content less than that of the mixture prior to processing.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the drying environment has a temperature of from approximately 120°F to approximately 150°F.

25. The method of claim 23 wherein the drying environment has a temperature of from approximately 120°F to approximately 150°F and wherein the mixture processing step includes the step of:

- maintaining the mixture in the drying environment for from approximately 50 seconds to approximately 70 seconds.

26. The method of claim 23 wherein the moisture content of the product is approximately 5% to approximately 0.25% by weight of the product.

27. The method of claim 23 wherein the moisture content of the product is approximately 1.25% to approximately 0.5% by weight of the product.

28. The method of claim 23 wherein the product has an average particle size and the method further comprises the steps of: grinding the product to reduce the average particle size of the product;

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placing the ground product in a container; and
hermetically sealing the container.

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~~23~~

¹⁸²
~~181~~

The method of claim ~~23~~ wherein the metal of the metal salt is selected from the group consisting of iron, copper, zinc and manganese.

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The method of claim ~~29~~ wherein the mixture has a total moisture content of from approximately 1.5% to 1.25% by weight of the mixture and the partially chelated product has a total moisture content by weight of from approximately 0.5% to approximately 1.25% of the product.

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A water soluble composition adapted for subsequent solubilizing and application to agricultural crops, comprising a nitrate-free, partially chelated mixture of a divalent metal salt, citric acid and sodium citrate, wherein the partially chelated mixture has a moisture content of at most 1.25% by weight of the mixture.

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The composition according to claim ~~31~~, wherein the divalent metal of the divalent metal salt is selected from the group consisting of iron, copper, zinc and manganese.

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The composition according to claim ~~31~~, wherein the partially chelated mixture has a moisture content of at most 0.5% by weight of the mixture.

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The composition according to claim ~~33~~, wherein the divalent metal of the divalent metal salt is selected from the group consisting of iron, copper, zinc and manganese.

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 were presented in co-pending Serial No. 08/755,236, a copy of which is attached. In the above amendments, claims 14, 15 and 19 are canceled, claims 1, 16 and 17 are amended, and claims 23-34 are newly presented. Claims 1-13, 16-18 and 20-34 are now pending in the present application.

A. Pending Claims Contain Amendments Inherent to Previously Examined Claims and are Entitled to the Benefit of the Filing Date of the Parent Application.

Previously pending independent claim 1 which described a method of manufacturing a product of the present invention, has been amended to

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